

tude been reinforced. The Junta did not call to mind with how little difficulty Vedel had forced the stronger passes of the Sierra Morena.

CHAP.
XIV.

1808.

November.

Pass of the
Somosierra
forced.

Buonaparte continued at Aranda till the 29th, when his head-quarters were removed to Bocaguillas, a village upon the skirts of the Somosierra. There he learnt that about 6000 men were entrenched upon the heights of Sepulveda, and that a stronger body occupied the pass. The advanced guard was attacked without the success which the French expected; but the Spaniards, instead of being encouraged by this advantage, forsook their entrenchments and dispersed. On the following morning the enemy, under M. Victor, attempted the pass. Sixteen pieces of cannon had been well placed to flank the ascent, and some attempts had been made to break up the road; but this easy means of defence had been so imperfectly performed, that the pass was won by a charge of Polish lancers. They were favoured in their approach by a thick fog; but the Spaniards must have strangely neglected the advantage of the ground, when they suffered a strong mountain defile to be taken by a charge of light horse. The men, fancying themselves betrayed, betrayed themselves by their own fears; they threw away their arms, and dispersed among the hills, leaving all the artillery and baggage to the enemy. And now the way to Madrid was open.

Nov. 30.

During the series of disasters which thus rapidly succeeded each other, there had been no time for the Junta to think of removing their residence to the capital, still less for them to take into consideration, on the appointed day, the plan for forming a Regency, and convoking the Cortes. They began now to feel themselves insecure at Aranjuez; . . . already advanced parties of the French had approached the Tagus; wherever they went there was no armed force to oppose them; they had appeared at Villarejo on the 28th, on the 30th at Mostoles; and if at this time

The Central
Junta retire
from Aran-
juez.

CHAP. two or three hundred horse, with a few infantry, had pushed on
 XIV. to Aranjuez, they might with perfect ease have surprised the
 1808. Junta, and by depriving Spain of its government, have inflicted
 November. upon it a more dangerous injury than all which it had hitherto
 Jovellanos's suffered in the field. This opportunity was overlooked by Bu-
 Memorial. naparte ; and the Junta, sensible of their danger when the con-
 p. ii. § 44. sequences of the defeat at Tudela and the rout at Somosierra
 were known, deliberated whither to retire. Florida-Blanca,
 who was sinking under the burthen of years and the anxieties of
 his situation, was for removing at once to Cadiz, and a few
 others agreed with him. Jovellanos, who added to his other
 virtues that of perfect calmness and intrepidity under any
 danger, represented that this would be sacrificing too much for
 safety ; and that the honour of the government, as well as the
 public service, required that it should establish itself as near as
 possible to the theatre of war. Toledo was named, and rejected,
 as having nothing but its situation to defend it. Cordoba and
 Seville were proposed, but liable to the same objection ; and
 Badajoz, which was the place that Jovellanos advised, was
 chosen : the provinces every where were open to the enemy, but
 Badajoz was a strong place, from whence the Junta might cor-
 respond with the British army, and with that which Romana
 was now re-forming in the northern provinces from the dispersed
 troops of Blake and the Conde de Belveder. There they could
 take measures for raising new armies in Extremadura and Anda-
 lusia ; and if the French should overrun those provinces, which
 there was now nothing to prevent them from doing, they might
 thence pass through Portugal to those northern parts where
 the founders of the Spanish monarchy had found an asylum from
 the Moors ; and where its restorers, animated with the same
 spirit, might, in like manner, Jovellanos thought, maintain the
 independence of their country. They were to halt at Toledo

on the way, and there take such measures as circumstances might require. CHAP.
XIV.

Two days before the passage of the Somosierra orders had been given to arm and embody the people of Madrid. The people were ready and willing, but this measure had been too long delayed; nevertheless a permanent Junta was formed, to maintain order, and provide for the defence of the capital; and the latter object was especially entrusted to Morla and to the Marques de Castelar. Now indeed was the time for that city to have emulated Zaragoza, and the spirit was not wanting in the inhabitants, had there been one commanding mind to have directed them. Priests and regulars came forward to bear arms, and old men, and women, and boys offered themselves for the service of their country; . . . for this purpose leaving their houses open, and their property to take its chance, they employed themselves in opening trenches, erecting batteries, and barricading the streets. The pavements were torn up, and women and children carried the stones to the tops of the houses, to be used from thence against the enemy. Parapets were made on the houses, and the doors stopped with mattresses. Whatever arms were in the possession of individuals were brought forth, and about 8000 muskets were distributed. The troops who were in the city, and the armed inhabitants, were now assembled in the Prado, that they might be distributed to their appointed stations; the first step for establishing that order without which all efforts in defence of the city would be ineffectual. Great confusion prevailed, and when the people called out for cartridges, Morla coolly replied, that there were none. Happy had it been for Morla, if the indignation which this proof of negligence excited had been directed against himself; had he then perished under the hands of the mob, the treachery which he was preparing would never have been

1808.

*December.**State of
Madrid.*

CHAP. known on earth, and he would have escaped perpetual infamy.
 XIV. But his character stood so high, that no suspicion pointed
 1808. towards him. It happened that among those cartridges which
 December. had been delivered in the morning some were found containing
 sand instead of gunpowder; they had probably been made by
 some dishonest workman, or mischievous lad; but in such a
 time of feverish irritation and imminent danger, the fact was of
 course imputed to a deep-laid scheme of treason, and the Marques
 de Perales was the person upon whom the crime was laid. The
 Duque del Infantado was informed that a mob was hastening
 toward the house of this unfortunate nobleman, and that he and
 his family were in the greatest peril. Infantado himself seems
 to have thought there was guilt somewhere; he repaired in-
 stantly to the spot, meaning to deliver over the suspected per-
 sons to a proper tribunal, by which they might be tried; but
 before he arrived Perales* had been pierced with wounds, and
 his dead body dragged upon a mat through the streets, the
 rabble accompanying it, and exulting in what they believed his
 deserved punishment.

*Marques de
 Perales
 murdered
 by the po-
 pulace.*

*The Duque
 del Infan-
 tado sent to
 the central
 army.*

The permanent Junta, who held their sittings at the post-office, as the most central point, taking into consideration the proximity of their danger, thought that more reliance was to be placed upon succour from without, than on any exertions of the inhabitants. These persons were in truth unequal to the arduous situation in which they were placed; even the example of Zaragoza had not taught them what wonders might be effected in a civic defence; and they did not consider, that as the first insurrection, and the consequent massacre at Madrid, had roused all

* M. Nellerro (Llorente) kills him twice. Once on the flight of the Intruder from Madrid, preliminarily, (t. i. p. 143); and secondly and definitively on this occasion. T. i. p. 159.

Spain to arms, a greater impulse would now be given if the capital opposed a determined resistance. They agreed therefore to content themselves with such efforts as might prevent the enemy from instantly forcing the town, and induce him to grant terms of capitulation. If by this means time could be gained for a diversion to be effected, or a successful attempt made in their favour, it would be well; but if not, their minds were subdued to this. They counted upon succour from San Juan's troops, many of whom were now arriving, and they dispatched Infantado to meet the remains of the central army, and bring it with all speed to the relief of Madrid. On the 2d of December, therefore, early in the morning, the Duke set out on this forlorn commission, accompanied by the Duque de Albuquerque and a small escort.

CHAP.
XIV.

1808.
December.

*Manifiesto
del Duque
del Infantado, i. 10.*

Only an hour or two after their departure, Bessieres, with the French cavalry, came within sight of Madrid, and took possession of the heights. Buonaparte arrived at noon on the same day, being the anniversary of his coronation. There were not more than 6000 troops in the city, but there were ten times as many men ready to lay down their lives in its defence; and the sight of the enemy excited indignation, not dismay. It was apparent that there was a total want of order among the people, but that they were in a state of feeling which might render them truly formidable: the bells of all the churches and convents were sounding, and from time to time the shouts of the multitude were heard, and the beat of drums. Preparations had been made which evinced at once the zeal and the ignorance of those by whom they were directed; the batteries were so low, that it was easy for the French to plant their guns where they could completely command them; and they were so near the wall, that there was scarcely room to work them, and the men would suffer more by the broken stones than the direct effect of the enemy's shot.

*Madrid
summoned
to surren-
der.*

*Infantado,
p. 4.*

CHAP. Buonaparte thought it easier to force the city than he would
 XIV. have found it; but though insensible to any humane considera-
 1808. tions, policy made him desirous of avoiding that extremity.
 December. Such a catastrophe might inflame the continent as well as Spain,
 by proclaiming to all Europe how utterly the Spaniards abhorred
 the yoke under which he had undertaken to subject them. An
 aide-de-camp of Marshal Bessieres was therefore sent to sum-
 mon the town in form; he was seized by the people, and would
 have been torn to pieces if the soldiers had not protected him.
 No communication could be opened that day with those who
 wished to deliver up the capital. In the evening the French
 infantry came up; arrangements for an attack in the morning
 were made by moonlight; and at midnight a Spanish Colonel,
 who had been taken at Somosierra, was sent with a letter from
 M. Berthier, Prince of Neufchatel, to the Marques de Castelar,
 exhorting him not to expose Madrid to the horrors of an assault.
 Castelar replied, that he must consult the constituted authorities,
 and ascertain also how the people were affected by their present
 circumstances before he could give an answer; and he requested
 a suspension of arms for the ensuing day.

*Morla
 treats for
 a capitula-
 tion.*

This reply was sent on the morning of the 3rd. Before it
 arrived an attack had been commenced upon the Buen Retiro,
 the favourite palace of Philip IV. which had been fortified with
 some care, as a point from whence the city might be commanded.
 Thirty pieces of cannon soon made a breach in the walls, and
 the place was carried, after a thousand Spaniards had fallen in
 defending it. The other outlets which had been fortified were
 won also, but the French were repulsed from the gates of Fuen-
 carral and Segovia. Some shells were thrown, in the hope of
 intimidating the inhabitants. In the forenoon of the ensuing
 day Berthier sent in a second summons. "Immense batteries,"
 said he, "are mounted, mines are prepared to blow up your

principal buildings, columns of troops are at the entrances of the town, of which some companies of sharp-shooters have made themselves masters. But the Emperor, always generous in the course of his victories, suspends the attack till two o'clock. To defend Madrid is contrary to the principles of war, and inhuman towards the inhabitants. The town ought to seek protection for its peaceable inhabitants, and oblivion for the past." The firing ceased, and at five in the afternoon Morla and D. Bernardo Yriarte came out to Berthier's tent. They assured him that Madrid was without resources, and that it would be the height of madness to continue its defence, but that the populace and the volunteers from the country were determined to persevere in defending it. They themselves were convinced that this was hopeless, and requested a pause of a few hours, that they might make the people understand their real situation . . . Hopeless, and without resources, when threescore thousand men were ready to defend their streets, and doors, and chambers! This would not have been said if Palafox had been in Madrid.

These unworthy deputies were introduced to Buonaparte, and one of those theatrical displays ensued in which he delighted to exhibit himself. "You use the name of the people to no purpose," said he; "if you cannot appease them, and restore tranquillity, it is because you have inflamed them, and led them astray by propagating falsehoods. Call together the clergy, the heads of convents, the Alcaldes, the men of property and influence, and let the city capitulate before six in the morning, or it shall cease to exist. I will not withdraw my troops, nor ought I to withdraw them. You have murdered the unfortunate French prisoners who fell into your hands; and only a few days ago you suffered two persons in the suite of the Russian Ambassador to be dragged through the streets, and killed, because they were Frenchmen. The incapacity and the cowardice of a

CHAP.
XIV.
1808.
December.

*Speech of
Buonaparte
to the de-
puties.*

CHAP. General put into your power troops who capitulated on the field
 XIV. of battle, and that capitulation has been violated. You, M.
 1808. Morla, what sort of an epistle did you write to that General?
 December. Perhaps it becomes you, Sir, to talk of pillage; you, who, when
 you entered Roussillon, carried off all the women, and distributed
 them as booty among your soldiers. Besides, what right had
 you to use such language? the capitulation precluded you from
 it. See what has been the conduct of the English, who are yet
 far from piquing themselves on being strict observers of the law
 of nations. They cried out against the convention of Portugal,
 but they have fulfilled it. To violate military treaties is to re-
 nounce all civilization; it is placing generals on a footing with
 the Bedouins of the desert. How dare you then presume to so-
 licit a capitulation, you who violated that of Baylen? See how
 injustice and ill faith always recoil upon the guilty! I had a
 fleet at Cadiz, it was in alliance with Spain, and yet you directed
 against it the mortars of the city where you commanded. I had
 a Spanish army in my ranks; and rather than disarm it, I would
 have seen it embark on board the English ships, and be forced
 to precipitate it afterwards down the rocks at Espinosa. I would
 rather have seven thousand more enemies to fight than be want-
 ing in honour and good faith. Return to Madrid. I give you
 till six o'clock in the morning; come back at that hour, if you
 have to announce the submission of the people; otherwise you
 and your troops shall be all put to the sword." Had there been
 a Spaniard present to have replied as became him in behalf of
 his country, Buonaparte would have trembled at the reply, like
 Felix before the Apostle.

*Surrender
 of Madrid.*

The enemy had now been three days before Madrid, and the
 ardour of the people was deadened by delay and distrust. De-
 serted and betrayed as they were, they knew not in whom to
 confide, and therefore began to feel that it behoved every one

to provide for his own safety. During the night the strangers who had come to assist in the defence of the capital, and such of the inhabitants as had been most zealous in the national cause, left a scene where they were not allowed to exert themselves; and at ten o'clock on the morning of the 5th the French General Belliard took the command of the city. Morla's first stipulation was, that the catholic apostolic Roman religion should be preserved, and no other legally tolerated. No person was to be molested for his political opinions, or writings, nor for what he had done in obedience to the former government, nor the people, for the efforts which they had made in their defence. It was as easy for the tyrant to grant this, as to break it whenever he might think proper. The fifth article required that no contributions should be exacted beyond the ordinary ones. This was granted till the realm should definitely be organized; and, with the same qualifying reserve, it was agreed, that the laws, customs, and courts of justice should be preserved. Another article required, that the French officers and troops should not be quartered in private houses nor in convents. This was granted with a proviso, that the troops should have quarters and tents furnished conformably to military regulations, . . . regulations which placed houses and convents at their mercy. The Spanish troops were to march out with the honours of war, but without their arms and cannon: the armed peasantry to leave their weapons, and return to their abodes. They who had enlisted among the troops of the line within the last four months were discharged from their engagements, and might return home; the rest should be prisoners of war till an exchange took place, which, it was added, should immediately commence between equal numbers, rank for rank. It was asked that the public debts and engagements should be faithfully discharged; but this, it was replied, being a political object, belonged to the cognizance of the

CHAP.
XIV.

1808.

December.

CHAP.
XIV.

1808.

December.

*Decrees
issued by
Buonaparte*

assembly of the realm, and depended on the general administration. The last article stipulated, that those generals who might wish to continue in Madrid should preserve their rank, and such as were desirous of quitting it, should be at liberty so to do. This was granted; but their pay was only to continue till the kingdom received its ultimate organization.

Notwithstanding the formality with which the soldiers were included in this capitulation, very few of them remained to be subject to its conditions. Castelar and all the military officers of rank refused to enter into any terms, and, with the main body of the troops and sixteen guns, marched out of the city on the night of the 4th, and effected their retreat. The Council of Castile, which had already suffered the just reproaches of their country, had now to endure the censure of the tyrant whom they had supported while his power was predominant, and disowned when the tide turned against him. He issued a decree, whereby, considering that that Council had shown, in the exercise of its functions, as much falsehood as weakness, and that, after having published the renunciation of the Bourbons, and acknowledged the right of Joseph Buonaparte to the throne, it had had the baseness to declare that it had signed those documents with secret reservations, he displaced them, as cowards, unworthy to be the magistrates of a brave and generous nation. Care, however, was taken to except those who had been cautious enough not to sign the recantation. At the same time another decree was passed, abolishing the Inquisition, as incompatible with the sovereign power, and with the civil authority. Its property was to be united to the domains of Spain, as a guarantee for the public debt. A third decree reduced the number of existing convents to one-third. This was to be effected by uniting the members of several convents in one; and no novice was to be admitted or professed till the number of religioners of